

Housing Choice Voucher (HCV) Program Online Preliminary Application Process

Georgia Department of Community Affairs Housing Assistance Division

Frequently Asked Questions (FAQ) Housing Choice Voucher (HCV) Program

1. How Do I Apply for the Housing Choice Voucher (HCV) Program (formerly Section 8?)

You may apply at our website **www.applygadca.com**. You can also visit your local library or other community service center that has public access to the internet in order to log on to the online portal.

IMPORTANT NOTICE: If you need assistance to complete the preliminary application due to a disability or are elderly or speak limited English, please call the Application Assistance line at (888) 858-6085.

2. Will the preliminary application be available in any language other than English? Yes. The preliminary application will also be available in Spanish. You can apply to the Spanish preliminary application at https//:gadca.spanish.tenmast.com/apply, or you can visit www.applygadca.com.

3. How will I know when the wait list is open?

When DCA opens the wait list, the application period date will be posted on DCA's two websites, www.applygadca.com and www.dca.ga.gov, on social media, such as Facebook, and Instagram, in the HCV regional offices, and in the county's local newspapers. You can also contact our Application Assistance line at (888) 858-6085 to check on the wait list opening status.

4. How do I know if I am eligible for the Housing Choice Voucher Program?

There are several factors that must be considered when determining your eligibility for the program. DCA will contact you when your name comes to the top of the wait list to determine your eligibility for the program. The list below provides some information on eligibility criteria; however, it is not intended to be all-inclusive:

- Qualify as an individual or a family.
- Head of household must be at least 18 years of age or an emancipated minor under state law.
- Have an annual income that does not exceed the applicable income limits established by the Department of Housing and Urban Development (HUD), at the time of admission. To

- access the HUD Income Limits Chart, for program participation, please visit the HUD website at http://www.huduser.gov/portal/datasets/il.html.
- All adult members of the household must pass a criminal background check.
- At least one household member must meet the HUD requirements of citizenship or legal immigrant status.
- The applicant or any member of the family may not owe any debt to DCA or any other public housing authority.

5. How do I complete the online preliminary application?

To complete the online preliminary application, you will need to have the following information available for *all* persons who are (or will be) in your household:

- Full legal name
- Social Security number
- Date of birth
- Annual Income from all sources (before taxes or deductions)
- Employment information

Once you complete the preliminary application, the system will provide you with a Confirmation Number. <u>Please write down or print your Confirmation Number and keep it for future reference.</u> You may submit only ONE preliminary application to any open wait list. Duplicate preliminary applications for the same county will be deleted from the system.

6. What do I do if I am elderly or have a disability and need assistance completing the application?

You can call DCA's Application Assistance line at (888) 858-6085. Once you call, you can speak with an operator who will complete your application over the telephone. The information that you provide to the operator will be confidential. You will also receive your confirmation number from the operator once your application is submitted. However, you will still need to provide to the operator your full name, social security number, date of birth, annual income from all sources, and your employment information.

7. If I do not have access to the Internet how do I apply to an open wait list?

You can call our Application Assistance line at (888) 858-6085. You also visit your local library, community service center that has public internet access, or you can use your smart phone to access the application online.

8. If I fill out the online preliminary application does this mean I will receive housing assistance?

No. Completing a preliminary application guarantees that your application is placed in the pool of applicants.

9. Can I receive an email from DCA once I complete my application to let me know what my application status is?

Once your application is completed you will receive your confirmation number to acknowledge that your application was accepted. DCA will not contact you unless your name is selected from the lottery wait list.

10. What if I do not submit an application during the application period?

You can only apply when the wait list are open. Once the wait list is closed, no one will be able to complete a preliminary application until the next open wait list period.

11. What if I need someone to advocate on my behalf and assist me with the application process?

You can select anyone to want to assist you with your application or you can call our Application Assistance line to assist you with completing an application.

12. Do I need to pay a fee to apply to an open wait list?

No. There is never a fee to apply for a Housing Choice Voucher Program (Section 8). Please be aware of any website or company that charges you a fee to apply for or to assist you with completing the Preliminary Application. You can call the Office of Inspector General's Fraud Hotline at (800) 347-3735 to report suspected cases of fraud.

13. How do I know if my preliminary application went through?

Once you complete the preliminary application, the system will provide you with a Confirmation Number to confirm that your application was received. You will have to provide this number if you need to make any updates to information on your preliminary application. Please write down or print your Confirmation Number and keep it for future reference.

14. If I log off the computer and my preliminary application is not complete will my information be saved?

No, your information will not be saved. You must complete the entire preliminary application in order for your information to be saved. You will receive a Confirmation Number which will indicate that your preliminary application was received and saved. Please save a copy of the Confirmation Number and keep it for future reference.

15. The online preliminary application website is running very slowly, what should I do? Due to the high demand for housing assistance we are expecting a large number of applicants. The preliminary application portal will be open 24/7 until the waitlist is closed. Please continue to log into the system to complete your application, or you can call our Application Assistance line, which is open 24/7, to assist you with your application. If you choose, you can also return to the online portal to complete and submit your application during non-peak hours in the evening.

16. Can I apply to an open wait list more than once?

No. You may apply to all open wait lists but you may only apply to each open wait list only once. Additional applications will not be accepted. Duplicate preliminary applications for the same county will be deleted from the system.

17. Will my name ever be taken off of the wait list?

If your name is selected from the lottery, it will remain on the wait list. Unfortunately, we cannot determine how long you will be on the wait list.

18. Can I apply to more than one open wait list?

Yes. You can apply to any open wait list for the county to which you wish to apply.

19. Can I apply to an open wait list in different counties?

Yes. You can apply to any open wait list, in any county.

20. Do I have to live in a county to be eligible to apply to that county's open wait?

No. You can apply to any open wait list, in any county. However, we will give those who are selected from the lottery a local preference if the live, work, or have been hired to work in the county that they apply to.

21. If I move to another city or county am I still eligible for a voucher?

If you selected a local preference for a county and you no longer live or work in that county you will not be eligible for the local preference. However, you may still be eligible for a voucher, if you meet the program qualifications.

22. Can I apply to an open wait list if I live in another state?

Yes. You do not have to be a resident of Georgia, or any of the counties, to apply for the program.

23. What do I do after I submit my preliminary application?

After you complete your preliminary application, and save your confirmation number in a safe place, there is nothing else that you will need to do. Once the wait list is closed, we will use a lottery system to select applicants for eligibility.

24. Will I be able to check my application status after I complete my preliminary application?

Once DCA has completed the preliminary application process and the wait list application period is closed, a random lottery process will be conducted from all of the applications. The lottery will randomly select a group of applicants to be placed on the lottery wait list. You will receive a letter from DCA to notify you that your confirmation number was selected to the lottery wait list. You can also visit www.applygadca.com to see if your confirmation number was listed selected for the lottery wait list, or you can call our Application

Assistance line at 888-858-6085 and speak with someone who will be able to tell you if you made the lottery wait list or not.

25. How Do I Make Changes to My Preliminary Application Once I submit it?

Once you complete and submit your preliminary application, and save your confirmation number, you are required to notify DCA of any changes to your household size, income, assets, address, phone number, email address, or employment status within 30 days of the change. Please use the Preliminary Application Update Form to update or correct any information that you need to change. Please visit www.applygadca.com to access the form. Once the form is completed, submit it to DCA at the address shown at the top and bottom of the form.

26. How will my placement on the wait list be determined?

All applications, once accepted into the online portal, and a confirmation number is given, will be placed in a pool of applicants. Names will be selected randomly by a lottery system. Therefore, we cannot determine where your placement will be until after your name is selected by the lottery system.

27. How will my name be selected from the wait list for a voucher?

DCA will use a lottery system to select applicants for the eligibility review. Applicants who are on the wait list will have their names entered into a lottery system and names will be selected randomly via the lottery.

28. How will I know when my name is selected from the wait list?

You will be contacted by the DCA, in writing, when your name has been selected from the lottery wait list. Due to the high demand for the Housing Choice Voucher (HCV) Program DCA cannot determine how long you will be on the wait list.

It is critical that you keep your mailing address current. If you cannot be reached by mail, your application will be closed and assistance will be offered to the next person on the wait list.

29. What happens when my name is selected from the lottery wait list?

When your name is selected from the lottery wait list, DCA will notify you with a letter requesting that you submit verification documents to determine your eligibility. Once you are scheduled for an informational briefing to review the program rules and your responsibilities, and after you have completed the briefing, you will then be issued a voucher.

30. How do I know where I am on the wait list?

We cannot determine where you are on the wait list until your name is selected from the wait list. Once your name is selected from the lottery system you will be notified in writing of your selection for an eligibility review.

31. Is there an approximate time I can anticipate the process may take once I receive a confirmation number?

Unfortunately we cannot anticipate if your name will be called from the wait list. Names will be pulled from the wait list depending upon the availability of funding and available vouchers.

32. Are preferences given to persons living in shelters, transitional housing, or homeless?

No. DCA has one (1) preference for applicants. The local preference is for residency (living, working, or hired to work) in the county that you are applying.

33. Is there an app for smartphones for applying to the wait list?

No, there is no app for smartphones. However, if you are able to access the internet through your smartphone, you can apply using your phone.

34. When will I be able to receive housing assistance?

Due to the very high demand for housing assistance the exact time frame will vary depending on the availability of funds from the U.S. Department of Housing and Urban Development (HUD).

35. If I don't have a job, can I still apply for the wait list to get a voucher?

Yes, you can still apply to the wait list. Applying to the wait list is the first step in the application process.

36. If I owe back rent to another housing authority, can I still apply to the wait list?

Yes, you can still apply to the open wait list. However, if your name is pulled for a voucher, you will be required to pay any past due rent, or any money, owed to any housing authority in the United States.

37. If I am homeless, how will DCA notify me if my name is called for a voucher?

We require a mailing address, which includes a PO Box. Several social service agencies throughout the state may provide a mail center that you could access for your mail, or you can use someone else's address when you can get mail.

DCA does not discriminate on the basis of race, sex, color, religion, marital status, familial status, national origin, age, disability, marital status, gender identity or sexual orientation in the access to or admission into housing programs or activities.



HUD Income Limits Chart links:

This one links to a table with all of GA counties listed (ELI, VLI & LI – income levels) www.huduser.org/portal/datasets/il/il15/FY2015_IL_ga.pdf

FY 2015 Income Limits Documentation System These links you have to "drive" to get there and First select a state; then select a county

www.huduser.org/portal/datasets/il/il2015/2015summary.odn

http://www.huduser.org/portal/datasets/il/il2015/select_Geography.odn